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## THE EDITOR'S DIARY.

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### Significant Recommendations of Esperanto.

THE report of Major Paul F. Straub, delegate to the Fourth International Esperanto Congress, at Dresden, on behalf of the War Department and the United States Government, has recently been made public and is of a gratifying warmth. Major Straub gives a description of the routine of the Congress, touches upon the new academy to whose hands are intrusted any changes and adjustments that may prove necessary in the course of the growth of the language and goes on to say:

"The Esperanto language is constructed on such simple and practical lines that one can learn to read it in an incredibly short time. The rules in grammar are few, and as there are absolutely no exceptions, it requires but a few hours' study to master them. Many of the classics have been translated in Esperanto; Esperanto books have been written; newspapers and magazines are published in it, and yet it has not been found necessary to make any essential changes in the original rules formulated by the author, Dr. Zamenhof. . . . By means of a few rules laid down in the grammar, new words can be coined to meet all the requirements of Esperanto, new scientific terms can at once be modified to suit the scheme, and there is absolutely no bar to the further extension of the language.

"I am quite convinced that Esperanto, which has been on trial for twenty years and found to fulfil the conditions required of an international language, is destined to perform an important rôle in international intercourse and will eventually become of great economic value, by facilitating trade relations between various nations. It is so easily learned that any one could be taught in a very short time to conduct a business correspondence therein with foreigners, so many of whom are already familiar with it. I am led to believe that at the present time it has become of great assistance to travellers in remote parts of Europe, and I do not believe it will be very long before it will be possible to find Esperantists in every city in the world. The progress in this country will necessarily be somewhat slower than in most foreign states, as the American is more apt to be satisfied with his own language alone, but, for

reasons above stated, I believe that a knowledge of Esperanto is of sufficient commercial importance to justify our Government in encouraging its spread."

From a military point of view, in Major Straub's opinion, Esperanto could at this time be of the greatest use in the sanitary service, "and," he adds, "I am of the opinion that the Government would be justified in giving it official countenance." He suggests its immediate introduction into the National Red Cross Association as an elective study course. The linguistic difficulties that have been encountered in the various expeditions and wars of recent years, Major Straub urges, have emphasized the necessity of an auxiliary international neutral tongue. Esperanto, it is his belief, meets this need because it is free from the usual objections raised against previous attempts at artificial languages, and he therefore makes the following recommendation:

"In view of the extensive use already made of Esperanto in foreign Red Cross organization, it is recommended that it be brought to the attention of our National Red Cross organization, so that it may be included as an elective study in the course of instruction for Red Cross columns.

"It is also recommended that the Fifth International Congress, which is to meet in Chautauqua in 1909, be given such Governmental encouragement and assistance as may be necessary in order to make it a success, and thereby assist in accomplishing its great purpose, and to enable the committee to make such arrangements as may be necessary to put the Congress on a plane commensurate with the dignity of our great country."

To this recommendation the Surgeon-General of the United States Army, with the endorsements of the Adjutant-General and the Secretary of War, replies:

"Respectfully returned to the Adjutant-General of the Army. The study of Esperanto in the military service should be encouraged, as it is believed that the proposed international language is destined to play an important rôle in international intercourse. It is recommended that the attention of the American National Red Cross Association be called to the subject, and that authority be given to furnish it a copy of this report.

"R. M. O'REILLY, Surgeon-General, U.S. Army."

In view of all these facts we feel that Major Straub is to be congratulated on his perspicacity and the Esperantists upon the interest of Major Straub and the United States Government.